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Talking Points for the DDCI
(1 November 1983)

Lebanon: Status of Reconciliation Talks

The second round of talks are underway in Geneva today. Each party reportedly is presenting its initial negotiating position.

- Opposition leaders greeted President Gemayel's speech yesterday with skepticism, insisting that they want action, not words.
- The atmosphere at the talks has been described as "glacial" and "tense"; participants even refuse to shake hands with each other. [REDACTED]

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President Gemayel met with Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam today.

- Gemayel probably hopes to soften the Syrian position, but it is unlikely that his personal entreaties will succeed. [REDACTED]

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Prospects for an agreement between the opposing factions are slim. Little common ground exists between the hostile groups' demands, and the conference is only scheduled to last several days.

- Christian leaders are intent upon preserving traditional Christian control of the government.
- The Muslims and Druze, on the other hand, want a greater share of power to reflect their majority status. They are demanding major reforms in the political system. [REDACTED]

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President Gemayel is under pressure from both sides and almost certainly is looking to the United States to force the antagonists to compromise. [REDACTED]

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The foreign parties to the Lebanese crisis are making mutually exclusive demands. Israel has declared that it will reject any results of the talks that do not recognize the validity of the Lebanese-Israeli agreement. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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